

Message Text

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4771

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C O N F I D E N T I A L RABAT 1436

EO 11652: XGDS-1

TAGS: SHUM, MO

SUBJECT: PRISONERS END HUNGER STRIKE

REF RABAT 1011

1. ACCORDING TO OPPOSITION SOCIALIST PARTY (USFP) MEMBER OF THE COMMITTEE OF INQUIRY, SECOND PHASE OF HUNGER STRIKE BY EXTREME LEFTIST POLITICAL PRISONERS IN MOROCCAN JAILS IS NOW OVER. THE COMMITTEE MET WITH STRIKING PRISONER REPRESENTATIVES FEB. 17. (USFP-AFFILIATED PRISONERS WERE NOT ON STRIKE.) PROMINENT DEMAND BY STRIKERS HAD BEEN THAT PRISONERS FORMERLY HOSPITALIZED BE RETURNED TO THE HOSPITAL AND THAT THEY BE ALLOWED TO RECEIVE PUBLICATIONS AND HAVE RADIOS, AND THAT THOSE DISPERSED TO TOTAL OF SIX PRISONS WHEN HUNGER STRIKE BEGAN BE REGROUPED IN KENITRA PRISON. SOURCE STATED THAT THE GOM HAD BEEN LIBERAL IN FACILITATING COMMITTEE CONTACT WITH AND ACCESS TO PRISONER REPRESENTATIVES AND HAD RESPONDED POSITIVELY TO A NUMBER OF LESSER DEMANDS, MOSTLY CONCERNING VISITS AND LIVING CONDITIONS. GOM HAD ALSO COUNTERED WITH AN OFFER TO REGROUP PRISONERS "EVENTUALLY" IN THREE PRISONS, AND OFFERED TO EXAMINE MEDICALLY THOSE WHO INSISTED ON RETURNING TO HOSPITALS, USUAL PRACTICE ON HOSPITAL ADMISSION. THE PRISONERS BALKED ON THIS CONDITION, THEN BACKED DOWN AND FINALLY ENDED THEIR STRIKE ON FEB. 23.

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THE COMMITTEE WILL MEET TO REVIEW THE SITUATION AT THE END OF MARCH.

2. THE COMMITTEE ALSO MET WITH THE TITULAR LEADER OF THE STRIKE, ABRAHAM SERFATY, WHO HAD NOT GONE ON STRIKE. IN FACT, HE HAD SENT THE PRISON DIRECTOR A LETTER EXPRESSING APPRECIATION FOR THE TREATMENT HE HAD BEEN GIVEN OF LATE, INCLUDING VISITS BY

HIS FAMILY. SERFATY ALSO TOLD OUR SOURCE THAT THERE SEEMED LITTLE TO BE ACHIEVED BY A STRIKE AT THIS TIME. MEANWHILE, OTHER PRISONERS APPEARED TO BE EDGING TOWARD INDEPENDENCE OF HIS LEADERSHIP, IN SOURCE'S ASSESSMENT.

3. THE COMMITTEE MEMBER FURTHER OBSERVED THAT PRISON FACILITIES WERE SO INADEQUATE AND THE MEANS AT THE DISPOSAL OF THE PENAL SYSTEM SO LIMITED THAT MANY OF THE PRISONERS' DEMANDS FOR IMPROVED LIVING CONDITIONS WERE IMPOSSIBLE TO MEET, AND EVEN THE PRISONERS RECOGNIZED THIS.
MOFFAT

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